



State of Utah


DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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September 10, 2002

TO: Minerals File

FROM: Paul Baker, Senior Reclamation Biologist 

RE: Site Inspection, Molycorp, Inc., Small Fry Mine, M/037/022, San Juan County, Utah

Date of Inspection: August 15, 2002
Time of Inspection: 1:00 to 1:30 p.m.
Conditions: Clear, 90's
Participants: Doug Jensen and Paul Baker, DOGM

Purpose of Inspection:

During the last inspection in May, the operator was doing some regrading work. We wanted to see how well it was completed and if any remedial work needed to be done.

Getting to the site:

The report for the May 1, 2002, inspection describes how to get to the site.

Observations:

Photo 1 shows an overview of the mine. The road leading to the site has been gouged, but most of the pad areas were ripped (Photo 2). Some of the ripping was done parallel to the contour, but some was just off from horizontal. Some of the pads were not ripped or scarified at all. While some of these pads were in areas where there was established vegetation that we had agreed in May should not be redisturbed, there were areas with no vegetation that we felt should have been ripped.

As far as we could tell, the portals appeared to have been adequately backfilled (Photo 3).

Conclusions and Recommendations:

The grading appears to have been adequate. The portals should be checked for the next few years to ensure the backfilled material does not slump.

Those areas that were ripped in the spring will need to be re-scarified to break the soil crust before they are seeded. Depending on how this is done, the operator may be able to get the furrows

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closer to horizontal and thus reduce erosion problems. Also, it should be possible to rip or otherwise scarify those areas without vegetation that were not ripped in the spring.

In trying to break the soil crust, the operator needs to be careful to not reduce the amount of surface roughness. The Division feels it is very important to leave the surface as rough as possible.

Once the operator has finished seeding, it should be possible to reduce the amount of reclamation bond being held for this site *if the operator requests the release*.

jb
cc: Denice Swankey, Moab BLM
Dick Brammer, Molycorp
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ATTACHMENT

Photographs
M/037/022
Small Fry Mine



Figure 1. Overview of the mine site.

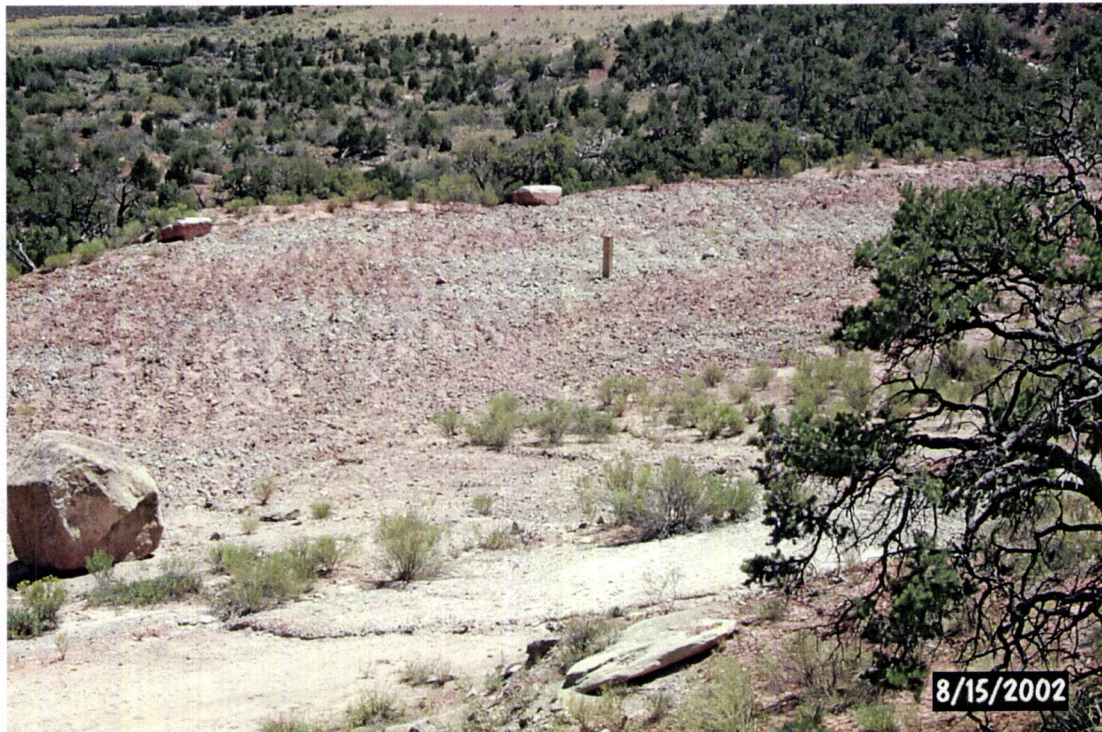


Figure 2. Ripped pad area.



Figure 3. Backfilled portal area.